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# Panel 4 Building Relationships with Practice with RURR (Really Useful Rigorous Research)

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## PANEL 4

### BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH PRACTICE WITH RURR (REALLY USEFUL RIGOROUS RESEARCH)

Chair: **Carol V. Brown**, Indiana University

Panelists: **Lynne Markus**, Claremont Graduate University  
**Jack Rockart**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
**V. Sambamurthy**, Florida State University  
**Harvey Shrednick**, Arizona State University

The objective of this panel is for academic researchers interested in conducting really useful rigorous research (RURR)<sup>1</sup> to share their experiences and insights. An underlying theme of the panel is that RURR requires a partnership relationship between the researcher and the practitioner. The panel will draw on the partnership model of Henderson (1990)<sup>2</sup> as an organizing framework and argue that partnerships conducive to RURR have common characteristics, such as mutual perceived benefits and a relationship built on trust.

The panel members include field researchers who have published academic research sponsored by practitioner groups, research centers within academic institutions, and academic institutions alone. Also among the panelists are the director of a highly successful university research center (J. Rockart, CISR), and a former CIO and past president of an international association of senior information executives, leading consultants, and academicians (H. Shrednick, SIM).

To stimulate debate and discussion, the panelists will initially be asked to share some of the challenges they have faced in sponsoring, conducting, or participating in research that is viewed as really useful by the senior IS manager. For example, some of the challenges with building and sustaining partnerships conducive to RURR include providing value to the practitioner partners without violating the objectivity of the research; reporting aggregate findings in order not to identify a specific source; and negotiating time limits for the dissemination of the results to third parties. The opposing argument—that RURR is an unattainable objective—will also be offered.

The panelists will also share some of their personal insights—from both academic and practitioner perspectives—about approaches and tactics in pursuit of RURR partnerships, and will respond to comments and inquiries from the audience about such topics as:

#### 1. Identifying and scoping topics for mutual benefit

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<sup>1</sup>Acronym inspired by *RUR: Really Useful Research in Information Systems*, a periodic publication edited by Gerald M. Hoffman in the early 1990s in which articles found to contain “results which are immediately useful to IS executives” were summarized for senior IS executives.

<sup>2</sup>J. C. Henderson, “Plugging into Strategic Partnerships: The Critical IS Connection,” *Sloan Management Review*, Spring 1990, 7-18.

## *Panels*

2. Gaining the buy-in of senior IS managers
3. Negotiating the terms of the partnership
4. Managing the research engagement, including unanticipated surprises
5. Respecting anonymity, confidentiality, and other terms of the contract
6. Delivering value-added insights to partners, while maintaining objectivity
7. Nurturing and sustaining the partnership beyond the initial engagement